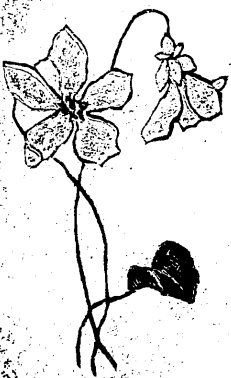


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THOMAS Y. CROWELL & CO., NEW YORK & BOSTON.

# THE VICTORY OF OUR FAITH

BY

ANNA ROBERTSON BROWN, PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "WHAT IS WORTH WHILE?"

*Kindessy, Mrs*  
"

*"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus  
is the Son of God?"—ST. JOHN.*

*given by Mrs. Enos M. Barton.*

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NOT long ago a young man incidentally calling at my home was speaking of some of the more serious problems of life and mind. He is a brilliantly educated and talented man, but in his attitude and conversation there was an undertone of deep sadness ; one heard the modern note of despair. He had lost faith in God ; and life appeared to him dark, desolate, tormenting, uncertain, without purpose, and altogether not worth while.

That his experience is typical, and not unique, is a striking phase of the University life of to-day. Faith too often fails in college halls : Teufelsdröckh has many brothers.

That conversation has haunted and troubled me. I have since been thinking of the supreme importance of faith, — of what it really means to those who have it ; and to-day I would speak at least a passing word to other college men and women about the worth of faith to life.





*"It is not the weariness of mortality, but the strength of divinity, which we have to recognize in all mighty things."* — RUSKIN.

*"So near are we, even in this troublous world, to the land of Everlasting Rest."*

## THE VICTORY OF OUR FAITH.

FAITH links us with the Eternal. It makes us one with God. This gives the soul the most majestic possible pose. Its attitude is the sublime. Standing above this puny earth-ball and the flying shadow which we call time, it looks out over endless reaches and unimagined joys. It sees the universe in its true relations, flashingly perceives the significance of the trivial and the temporal, judges kindly of the commonplace, and learns to wait patiently among the things that are for the things that are to be.

There comes a feeling that one has now really begun to live. Life rolls off into far recesses of joy and light, and the soul quivers with happy awe. I used to have twinges of fright at the happiness of faith. The strange, infinite possession seemed too good to be believed. How could it last forever? But every day steadies my confidence. It flows on and

on, without noticeable jar or break. Eternal life beats like a full pulse under all we are and feel and know; unharassed in sorrow, and giving a touch of calm and wisdom to the moment of most excitable rapture.

It is not only that life fills the soul, but that it is so rich, tranquil, and serene. Nothing tires the spirit overmuch. Days and duties bound by, and one exults in a sense of glowing inward health. Nothing finally hurts or grieves but sin.

Faith shows the soul its final goal. "Eternity: thither, of a truth, and not elsewhither, art thou and all things bound!" We plunge towards the forever, and that with leaps of joy. Unconsciousness nowhere awaits us; our souls are quick, and that for endless years.

This gives a large prospective to our lives. We are not afraid of the glorious endeavor. We project to-day into a hereafter in which our aspirations may come true. Our possibilities sweep out into space, unlimited and vast. There is room to strive and grow, without fear of a future spiritual confine. We are uncramped by the bitter human. Of no real

thing need we ever say, To this there comes an end. Love, hope, peace, are ours forever. Our every action has repose.

Faith calls us to the heroic. The "child of eternity" is brave. Do we not grow along the line of what we think and read of? The hours of silence chiefly make us all. But the mind of the Christian is filled with thoughts of God. Jehovah is the figure of his dreams. This gives grandeur to his impulses, tenderness to his affections, and a ringing resolution to his deeds!

We do not really wish a languid life of lotos-calm. Youth is filled with fiery rages. We are all admirers of the triumphant, and worship at its feet. To the conqueror, the chariot; but he who fails returns in rags or chains. Ever we adore the strong. "It is not to taste sweet things," says Carlyle, "but to do true and noble things, and vindicate himself under God's Heaven as a god-made Man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero!"

But the world's idea of the heroic is fiercely cruel. "*Les Conquérants*," a striking picture

lately brought from the Paris Salon, represents a phalanx of stern, set warriors — Sesostris, Alexander, Philip, Napoleon, and others — riding to victory through the surging bodies of the starved and naked dead. Faith cries grandly to the human spirit, Endure, Serve, Love, Sacrifice, Forgive ! In its onward march it wakes a dying world, and rouses it to everlasting life.

Faith gives us an adequate ideal. It moulds us in the image of the Divine. Virtue is, after all, the supreme charmer. The soul does not cling to this vain self forever. Faith holds up the large and loving figure of the Son of man, and says, Into this incomparable likeness thou, too, O soul, mayst grow ! Ah, tender, thrilling thought, — that we, so weak, so poor, so stung by life, so tempted, distressed, sad, weeping, and most often overcome, may silently, resistlessly, and as certainly as the flowers bloom, attain to a heavenly sweetness of spirit, to courage, cheer, gentleness, patience, love !

This hope of the divine is worth all other creeds and tenets of the world. Nothing stirs the passionate heart so deeply as this, that holi-

ness may yet be won. To that end, we are willing to endure the cross, to weep, suffer, strive. It is the promise of the fulfilment of our highest dream, — of that which we whisper to ourselves in the night-watches, and when none are by. It is not transmigration of soul we long for, but this blessed transfiguration, radiant and supreme. What we wish to be, we are to be: this gives signal comfort to the race.

Faith triumphs over the hard conditions of life. Hard conditions exist. For a time they bend our backs and wring our hearts. Life has appalling aspects for us all. In what sad outlines it looms up before the soul! The Grendel of this present world creeps out by night, and carries off our dearest hopes. Famine and plague draw near. At each step there is something not to our mind. The longed-for heroic has many foes. Obstacles spring up before each manly wish. The colossal, when builded at last, proves worm-eaten, and leans and totters while we gaze. We cannot desert our post with honor, but it is easy to be malcontents. Shall we take life with whimpers? Shall we fight, or weep and give up? Shall

we stoically accept our fate? Nay, rather let us endure, as seeing Him who is invisible!

It is well that there are hard things in life. They bring dignity into the conflict, and make the combat worth while. The strong soul craves stout foes; it thrills at the clash of steel on steel. They also prove the real value of faith. If it should ever fail us in an emergency, we should give it up at once. Our belief shall be the competent; our ally must be strong.

But it is equal to life at every turn. This is a great excitement to me,—to watch it conquer things, one by one. There is a spice of mischief in seeing surprised impediments go down. They show their astonishment in their leave-taking. The incredible has happened, and they rub their eyes.

Faith conquers life by a large trust, and by stalwart strokes of loving work. It says, These things are tests and charms. They are the best condition—nay, the only condition—of achieving that Godlike which we desire. They are God's ways of making strong, perfect, and complete His own. The iron "ring of Necess-

sity whereby we are all begirt," becomes thereby a robe of strength,—the armor of great might.

We grieve at Providence only because we have as yet imperfect insight and petulant wills. A human soul is always let down from eternity at the exact spot where it can best live and grow. No God-given condition is inhospitable. God never asks us to stay where there is no Ideal. He never places us in a squirrel-cage of drudgery, and requires us to wear out the body and weary the spirit in any useless activity or routine. To all His paths there is a goal. Our every task counts, if it be done well. If it be done idly or ill, it weighs down the hopes of the universe, and is a drag upon human progress.

The man of grand faith says, Any place is good enough and big enough for me. Give me but a foot of earth to stand on, or to die on, and I will make the spot in God's eyes historic! Give my life a radius of present influence of but half a mile, and I will some day shake the corners of the globe! Here in this great creation which, misinterpreted, maligned, and mis-



understood, groans and travails with pain, I will show what faith can do ! I will look out upon life calmly ; I will see it truly ; I will trust superbly, and, God helping me, act well ! I am at home in caves, in deserts, in dungeons. With God and heaven above me, I can never be unhoused. Nothing discomfits me. Condition ? Thou shalt be my bond-slave ! Circumstance ? I will lead thee with a whip-cord ! Opportunity ? I can do my work in Wartburg Castle and in Bedford Prison ! My tub is large enough — you may even take my sunshine — I will carve out destinies in the dark.

No soul is meanly endowed, or hampered by Heaven in its toil. God has given every creature his own peculiar gift. In all the universe there is no wholly stupid person. Each has his mission, and is necessary, in some wise, to the health and happiness of all. The one problem for each soul to solve is that of faithful and earnest work. The gift is surely there, and God will bless its honest use.

Woman weeps for beauty. That she was not born rarely lovely is to her a daily pang.

The gift she has, she toys with, what she imagines she has not, preys upon her and robs her of her rest. But what charm in a face can exceed the clear, steady shining of eyes that look on God? When we dry our tears for the human, God puts upon our looks a touch of the radiant, compassionate Divine.

Poverty constrains many. That it strangles the powers is a general belief. But St. Francis of Assisi chose poverty, in order to have freedom and large time. The Son of man was poor, and yet walked on earth the most majestic spirit that the world has ever known. Ah, it delights me — this untamable grandeur of the soul! That heroic life proves that humanity stripped of its gew-gaws may yet be regal and complete.

What we were born to is like a fatal coil. We are told that one's grandfather cannot be shaken off; that he is to be a lasting nightmare. But faith teaches the veriest vagabond the way of escape from his ancestors. The soul may slip the leash of heredity. Fate pursues, but it eludes the lasso. It is doomed to nothing but itself. It is heir to nothing which God can-

not regenerate, use, soften, or restrain. Sometimes the supposed hindrance turns out to be an unusual and unlooked-for talent or opportunity. The slave-boy becomes ere long the Bishop of the Niger.

What we mis-name loneliness, faith shows us to be a chance for the companionship of the Divine. The world parts us from God. Friends draw us away. Love puts mists and veils before our eyes. But when the world recedes, or when the dear one dies, then we may take counsel with the Eternal, listen to His voice, and prepare ourselves in silence to meet again the terrors and combats of our fate. We see God face to face—not in the midst of a multitude, or over the heads of a crowd. Even sad Bernardine Holme has glimpses of this truth. She says, “If I believed in God as a personal God, I should be inclined to think that loneliness were part of his scheme; so that the soul of man might turn to Him, and Him alone.”

I know of no kingly soul which has not been trained for sovereignty in long and lonely hours. Moses, Paul, and John had all their meditative years. It is God’s way of schooling

for grandeur. The great deed springs from a time of solitude and prayer.

·We cannot escape sorrow. To some form of ache of body, mind, or spirit we are all born. Grief will find us, though we seek a far covert. The thing we needs must meet, let us meet honorably. From the uncertain possible it is permitted to draw back with dread; but let us ever meet the inevitable with no visible qualm. Let us be hospitable to grief. Grief has a grand mien that chills and awes, but his inmost heart is kind. Let us meet our grave-visaged guest with gracious ease. Hereafter we may find that we have entertained an angel unawares.

Faith bravely says of sorrow, Let it be a tonic—a bracer-up of my eternal health! To be granted pain to bear is a spiritual honor. This thing shows that God takes me for some sort of a hero. Let me rise to the occasion, and act well the grand *rôle* assigned me. Life is meant for discipline—there remains no more mystery nor woe in pain. It is what makes us grow. The allotted grief is in each case the fit one for strength and insight. No other experience would answer. Grief gives truth and tender-

ness to life. Also, sorrow is a most uplifting thing: it makes the jubilant possible. Ever I find that the steeds of grief may draw a chariot of triumphant joy.

A strong soul is not afraid of pain. He who wishes to help the world says, In me I find the make-up of my race. Let deep life come my way — spare not a single pang. If I may thereby better understand, I would forego no hurt nor bitter lesson. He realizes all so tenderly, dear lover of humanity, that we must live through things ourselves, either in experience or sympathy, before we can tell others what to do in an emergency. Hearts break, that the world may be kept informed.

Other limitations of life are ignorance, folly, and mistakes of judgment. It seems incredible that an earnest soul could ever be silly. But life daily proves to us that we all are human. Folly is a point of contact between man and man, and a leveller of pride. Each man must at some time say grimly to himself, It does not disturb me, — it refreshes me, rather, — that on one supreme occasion I was an utter fool. Before that hour I stood apart from human kind;

I was somewhat lonely in the world. But now I have loving comrades, and legion kin; I comprehend the antics of my race. Moreover, I now have compassion for every brother-fool. He is to me no more a lunatic, but mine own familiar friend.

Our judgment is neither adequate nor inerrant. We are but half-witted, and we get so nervous when the crucial hour arrives! What we did for our best good turns out to have been a wild act. We throw our powers recklessly away, and take steps that we can nevermore retrace. This cuts us, that we had a chance to choose, and chose wrong. Our blunders cause us tears and pain.

Life is pitiful, in that it is full of these mistakes. They are grotesque gaucheries, and seem so unnecessary and sad. And each mistake exacts an inevitable penalty. Nature cannot forgive; fate refuses to forget. But Faith turns even our mistakes to account, and says with soothing accent, These, too, are a part of the wondrous ways of God. It is thus He upbuilds the soul in humility and wisdom. It is thus He trains it to rely on Him alone.

What has happened, God knew would happen — He allowed to happen. He can make the best of the deed, if we give it honestly to Him. This solace stills repining, lulls regret.

Faith endues our work with power. Do we not all wish to make our lives effective? How we scorn the weak, uncertain touch! Belief puts the soul into such harmony with God and the universe roundabout, that its every deed becomes efficient. It meets with no confusion of impulse or desire, and proves nobly incapable of the puny.

Negation is nerveless; the affirmative alone inspires. What great work is easily built upon this, *I do not know?* That premise stifles the soul. But faith quenches no enthusiasm: it arouses our vigorous zest.

Some souls think to display strength by defying the Creator, and running counter to His will. What of their lasting success? Can one oppose Omnipotence and escape injury? It is as if an engine-wheel should turn against the belt that guides it, and defy the power without which it would be but a motionless, dead mass. But the child of God may in every

emergency call Omnipotence to his help and succor.

There is an inspiration of the Holy Ghost. I have seen it working in the world. It is a strange, electric, vivifying force. Those who have it need no tongues of fire upon the head to-day. They are everywhere marked men and women. Their presence shoots forth spiritual sparks and thrills. A flaming, loving energy is in all their words and ways. The efficiency of faith cannot be computed in earth's dynamic phrase: it achieves the superhuman at each historic step.

Faith also gives our work point and poise. How many of us know exactly what we are about in this world, or are consistent with our own ideas? Left to ourselves, we halt with indecision. But faith establishes a duty-centre, around which life swings very simply, without friction, without discord, without regret. It teaches plainly and at once that our work in the world is to do—not something remarkable, but something right; and that this right is ever and always the present will of God. From the moment that we accept this truth,



we have a purpose in our lives, unshakable, undauntable, and triumphant in solving the problems of our career. What is God's will for me to-day? This is our one care.

Faith gives us the word of God. College thinkers grow up in libraries, and they know the great books of the world. But the more one reads the Bible, and studies it sincerely, the more one realizes how surprisingly and majestically it towers above all other books. From all other scriptures one turns away with sighs; somewhere one comes upon the inconsequent or the base. The Bible is powerful, dazzling, consoling, heart-searching, and inspired.

Faith saves us from sin and hell. It is a terrible thing for a human soul to be let loose in the world. Darkness is about its path; gins and snares await the coming of its feet. Each man is a possible prey of Satan; the universe is hostile to each new-born soul. Temptation is nothing that we can play with, or put gracefully from us at the tip of the fan or cane. The Arch-Enemy arrays his whole armament, strengthened by success through these six thou-

sand years, against the struggling soul, to drag it down. Terrific combat! Plight of shock and horror! "Name it as we choose," says Carlyle, "with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness, — to such Temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but Half-men."

Temptation is the most baffling thing I have ever thought about, and yet it is the most real. What is it? It seems to be something within us, beckoned to and abetted by something without. Each of us is two. Half the soul enlists for evil, and is looked upon by the other half with scorn and shame.

Temptation is not a disgrace; it is a test of strength. It is not the number of temptations escaped, but the number met and conquered, that marks our heavenward progress. The work of the world is done by men and women who know life at its fiercest. Christ Himself had every typical temptation possible to the soul; for He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

We cannot meet and conquer temptation in our own strength. Something higher we must have. I wonder if any human being really thinks he has power in himself to be good—good not only in the eyes of the world, which is at times unobservant, or purblind, but in the grave, searching eyes of his own heart? We all feel that perhaps we could withstand temptation better if it came under more favorable circumstances. But the affable hour delays.

The value of Christianity is that it takes hold of temptation at the root,—in the mind and heart. It says little of actions, but deals squarely with the thoughts and feelings and desires. When they are pure, the deed is upright.

Temptation at the moment of spiritual exaltation has its absurd, sad side. Strange that the soul should be so deluded and misled! Strange that it should consent to cut the sorry figure that it does! Take pride, for instance. The strut of pride is the most ludicrous possible gait. What are the things that we are proud of?—that make us hold our heads so

high, and take such haughty, mincing steps? Name one that is worthy of our unbiassed praise. When we think of the many generations of men, so swiftly passing over the human stage, there is the incongruity of the absolutely ridiculous in attaching importance to the deeds of any special one. The greatest of men can scarcely be seen at a distance of two thousand years, and his million comrades not at all. They are as gnats in the sun, or as motes that swim beneath the moon. Whatever we are proud of in ourselves, is in the sum of things insignificant, we may be sure. The only thing God sees of mark in us is the immortal soul. Faith helps us to gauge all things by the absolute eternal.

Greed? What matters it in the end whether we have grasped at a kingdom or at a ginger-dog? Sloth? And what do we enjoy, curled up in the lazy lair? Lying? The man who lies is not only a present knave,—he is a future laughing-stock. Hardness of heart?

This last is a temptation both subtle and pervasive. Most men by nature are not kind. They do not sympathize deeply with those

whose experiences they have not known. They turn coldly from distress, not realizing that life is a most deadly boomerang, — that every unkind word or deed becomes a missile to hurt ourselves hereafter. The exact event returns.

Nor do they get along well with each other. Every human being is to every other, at times, an infuriation. This gives a serious aspect to life, for we all have neighbors. Without faith, humanity is a chagrin. The half-god pierces and forgets. People change, — they grow away from us; they deceive us; they are not what we thought. Instead of smiling flesh, we find a skeleton of vanity and selfishness revealed. Death is the easiest way of parting from many a one. If it come before the unveiling of the bones, it is a day of mercy: we are spared the sternest shock of life.

Christianity dispels bitterness of spirit, and eases the friction of life. It helps us conquer our antipathies, and does away with wrath and revenge. It knows no rancor, and harbors no grievance. It lifts us to the mag-

nanimous. It shows that crossness is either extreme weariness, or else a most childish distemper of soul. Faith gently says, Let me forbear. Let me ever follow the way of God. That is, always and immediately to forgive.

We do not achieve the angelic in this life. There are certain people whom we cannot yet meet with safety. They provoke us immeasurably. And they always come our way when a trying combination of weather, fatigue, and wearing work gets us off our guard. Then temptation springs upon us like a tiger. How humiliating it is to fall from patience! But that one is not in absolutely unfailing good temper is no proof that the Christian life is unreal. Many silent victories mark the triumphant and lasting progress. Such experiences are given to teach the soul greater patience, and to keep us from spiritual pride. Nothing upsets self-righteousness so quickly as an adventure with the *bête noire*. Our pet aversion is a salient means of grace.

Again we shrink from people because they are not refined. They grate upon us, and vex us with their dull instincts and their

crude taste. What we dislike and object to is the vulgar. Faith takes away the commonness from life. It shows us that all things human are God's children, co-heirs with us to glory, and therefore not too mean for association, help, and love. In heaven we may be neighbors for a thousand years! The soul that has found God says, To me there exists no more the Horde; everywhere I see flashing the Divine!

Doubt? Doubt, except that of honest inquiry, is a shakes, a sort of ague; while faith is vigorous health of soul.

Unbelief is a paralysis of one of the best powers of the soul. For consider, when a man is unbelieving, he is without hope. But hope is alert vitality of spirit. Why is it ever imagined to be a mark of intellect to be in doubt? When a man is unbelieving, he can neither love truly nor work grandly. He is handicapped, and that to a fatal degree. "The affirmative class," says Emerson, "monopolize the homage of mankind. They originate and execute all the great feats." When a true Christian is born of God, there comes into the world not only a believer,

but a new thinker, lover, doer ! He is a man of sudden and surprising action.

- Faith takes away doubt, and gives us trust. This brings an immeasurable gain into our lives ; for every impulse to trust enlarges the soul, but doubt in time shrivels the finest nature. Faith says, I am in the hands of my Maker. Two things will never happen to me, — the thing that is too much for me, and the thing that is not best for me. God never overloads the soul.

Doubt brings nervelessness and fear. But of the grandly believing soul the world must ever say, There walks a man we cannot scare. Though we shake death before his eyes, he is not afraid ! His comrades were “stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword : they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins ; being destitute, afflicted, tormented,” and yet he maintains his calm, unswerving way. Has any one ever seen a man of the moral courage of the man of rooted faith ? His fearless bearing is historic and superb.

Doubt also brings despair, — that sad some-



thing which comes when tears are gone. As long as we can weep, we can somehow live dully on. But despair is the soul in final anguish, and groping for the bitter end. Faith — O loving contrast — brings us joy! What the Christian joy is cannot be set down in words. It is a buoyancy of spirit that lifts the soul into fresh, measureless, and unfatigued delight.

In all our strong temptations, God not only hears and helps us — He forgives. He rids us of remorse. Remorse! Remorse! Goad and scorpion of the soul! What dost thou, sad, unbelieving world, with thy load of care and sin? How dost carry thine oppressed and troubled heart? To whom are thy longings uttered, and before whom are thy quick tears shed? But we, forgiven, go our way in happy peace. Majestically we gaze on eternity, and that without a dread. There remains to us no fearful looking forward to of judgment and of fiery indignation. We are redeemed by the blood of Jesus: the Sacrifice avails.

Faith gives wisdom in the affairs of life. If we only knew a little more! If we could

only guess how things are coming out! Our worldly wisdom is at fault—it always comes an hour too late. We are inadequate to deal with our careers, and those careers impinge upon the universal good or harm. What shall the blind soul do?

“Commit thy way unto the Lord,” says faith, “and He shall bring it to pass.” This allays our frets. God arranges the events of our lives with perfect love and foresight. God—O grand thought!—stands even now in the silence and shadow of eternity, marking out happy ways for our feet to tread. Only let us listen for His kindly guidance. Faith helps a man to find his real best in relation to his business, his country, and his home.

God not only chooses the work of the man who trusts in Him—He gives him growing opportunities, and builds up his business upon truth and honor. Every business man of loyal faith is a possible proof of God’s help in the minute details of daily life. It is pointed out that the first miracle of Jesus was to help a housekeeper. When we pray

over our work in hand, the matter is apt to come to a good conclusion.

Citizenship is a sacred trust. Where a man is born is neither his virtue nor his fault; but that he should live and vote uprightly is a divine decree. Countries cannot be ruled at random — though at times the scheme is tried. It takes Godlike wisdom for the task. “The highest conception of the State,” says Phillips Brooks, “is that it is a thought of God.” But who can uphold, develop, and farther this thought, except the man who works with God? Let us take counsel of the Eternal, and our civic problems will soon be somewhat solved.

Christianity creates and conserves the highest type of home. The truest manhood and womanhood can be attained by faith alone. Faith builds all life upon eternal aims. Faith gives fidelity, patience, tenderness, wisdom, and forbearing love. It exalts and blesses all human relations, making one in heart and soul both father and mother, parent and child, brother and sister, friend and lover; and thus it gives to our passing earthly affections some

touch of the grandeur and steadfastness or that love in heaven which is to be.

Faith wipes away our tears. Ah, the heart-breaks there are in this weeping world! Tears of which no one knows but God; fierce rebellions and longings; inward anguish of spirit; grief unutterable, deep, and sad! Looking over the city at twilight, I sometimes think, Under each roof there is a heartache. Yes, every eye we have yet looked into has at some time wept! Broken health, perished dreams, thwarted ambitions, quenched aspirings, pangs of ingratitude, wounded love, outraged trust, stings of hate and scorn, bitter lamentations and grievings for a vanished voice and hand, — these, ah these, are the unwritten histories of those we all too idly meet and pass!

But faith is a supreme comforter. It says, The event passes — the Ideal remains. True happiness is elsewhere thine. Give heaven thy grief, and turn at once to matters that concern the world. Rise above the individual catastrophe; look out upon God's grave and unharmed Whole. Turn thy mourning from thyself; feel thou henceforward for the world's

woe ! “ O my Brother, my Brother,” cries Teufelsdröckh, moved with sobs of pity, “ why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes ! ”

O thou who treadest the wine-press alone, lay this thy whatsoever pain upon the breast of God ! Hath he not known our griefs, and carried our sorrows ? That which to-day breaks the heart shall to-morrow shine as the crowning mercy of one's years ! God is not maiming thy life, but is leading it to greater blessings, that shall make thy heart rejoice. Trust thou the Eternal. “ In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them : in His love and in His pity he redeemed them ; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”

Faith conquers our final foe. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? This is the last, great triumph of our faith.

O soul of man, to what inheritance of glory art thou redeemed ! The centuries winging their way across the sky of time shall fade and pass ; the planets circling round their suns shall find their light grow dim ; the graves shall

be opened; the sea shall be no more; the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; the mountains shall dissolve with trembling, and the elements with fervent heat; — but thou, with many generations of men, of all nations, and kindreds and people and tongues, shalt stand before the throne and before the Lamb forever!

There thou shalt meet the good and the great of the world's years. There thou shalt see thy dear ones yet once more, and that for everlasting days! Heart shall speak to heart again, and eye to eye. Thou shalt know no more toil, nor care, nor weeping, nor farewells. The peal of gladness is forever. Love shall always be.

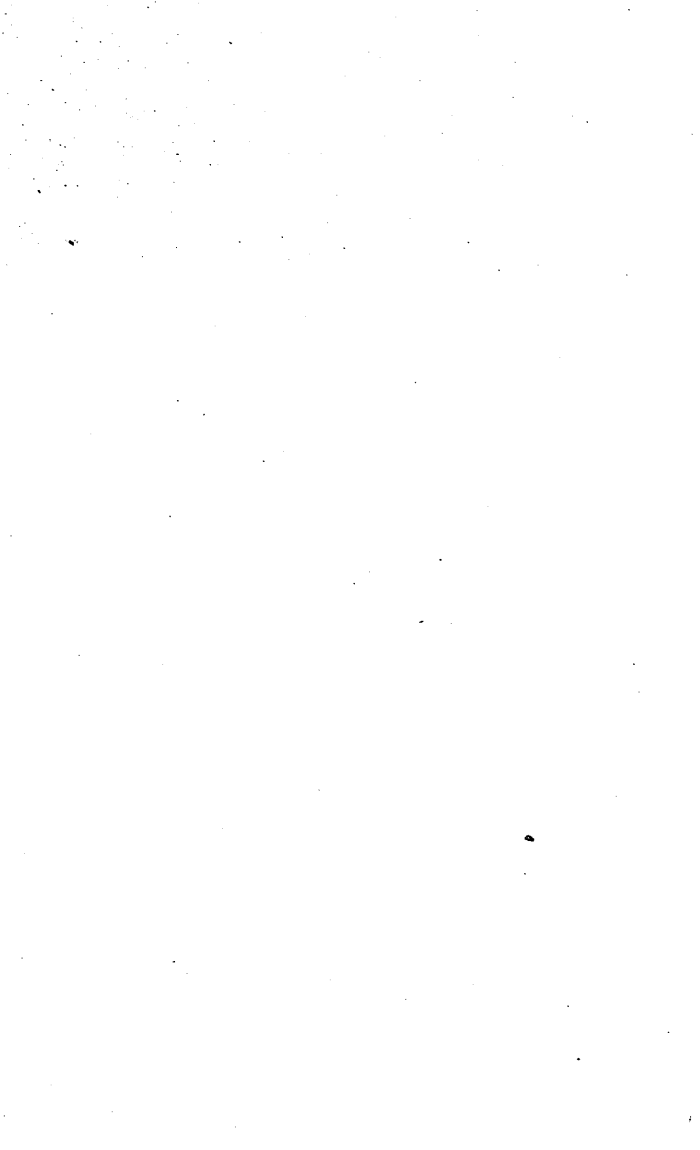
There, encompassed in glory, and adored by myriad hosts, thou shalt see in that heavenly city the Light thereof, — Him that ever liveth, the Faithful and True, the Author and Finisher of our faith, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Standing before Him, with that multitude of them which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white

in the blood of the Lamb, thou, too, shalt join the angels' song of victory, saying, —

“Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

AND AMEN.







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